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ABSTRACT

Interest is growing in planning and implementing new systems of holding child and family services accountable for results. The Results-Based Accountability (RBA) Project at the Harvard Family Research Project (HFRP) has supported and built upon recent state efforts to develop these new accountability systems for child and family services. The RBA reports, including this case study, are intended to help share insights and experiences in designing and implementing RBA systems. This report on RBA in Oregon begins with a brief overview, which summarizes the key points in the case study. A section of sociodemographic information and information about the state's governance structure directs the reader to unique qualities of the state that have helped to influence its RBA work. A timeline of the most critical events in the design and implementation of RBA efforts is included, along with a list of the key terms and concepts used in the state. Each separate RBA effort is described in detail, including its history and impetus, those who initially sponsored the effort, and the legal mechanism behind the effort. In addition, the early champions and actors involved in each effort and the funding sources and resources that support the effort are noted, and the governance and coordination between this effort and any others that may exist are described. The design and implementation of each effort are also described in detail, including information about the planning of the effort; the selection of goals, indicators, and targets; the collection of data; and the ways in which stakeholders were involved. The report describes the state infrastructure that supports the effort, such as staff, computer resources, and training. Where applicable, the report describes the way in which program evaluation links to the RBA effort. Each section also includes information about how each effort is being used. The uses include planning, citizen engagement, programming, budgeting and contracting, and communication. A list of key contacts is provided, and a final section describes in detail the objectives, scope, and methodology of the study. The

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report includes a table summarizing points of distinction among RBA efforts in the eight states studied. (EV)

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Aiming for Accountability: Oregon. Reaching Results

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AIMING FOR ACCOUNTABILITY:

OREGON

Priscilla Little

Harvard Family Research Project
Cambridge, MA
1998

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HARVARD FAMILY RESEARCH PROJECT

Founded in 1983 by Dr. Heather Weiss, the Harvard Family Research Project (HFRP) is today at the center of a national movement to promote information regarding how states and communities are developing processes to improve and redesign child and family services and policies. HFRP's pathbreaking research provides practitioners, researchers, and policymakers with timely, insightful information about effective child and family services and policies.

Disseminating its research widely, HFRP links people, programs, ideas, and resources together to create innovative services and family-sustaining policies. HFRP's research helps states and communities create systems to monitor and assess programs and services. Using HFRP research and analysis, schools, agencies, and communities are learning about the best strategies for successful programming to improve child and family outcomes.

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AIMING FOR ACCOUNTABILITY:
OREGON

INTRODUCTION 1
- Background 1
- What Is Results-Based Accountability? 1
- Description of the Series 2
- Audience 4
- Format 4

OVERVIEW OF OREGON 7
- Unique Features of Oregon's RBA Efforts 7
- Summary of Oregon's RBA Efforts 7

OREGON BACKGROUND INFORMATION 9
- Sociodemographic and Economic Status 9
- Political Context for Children and Families 9
- Local Culture 10

TIMELINE 12

TERMS AND CONCEPTS 13

OREGON BENCHMARKS EXPRESS STATE VISION 15
- History of Oregon Benchmarks Effort 15
- Process of Identifying Benchmarks 16
  - Citizen Input Helps Translate Vision into Benchmarks 16
  - How Are Benchmark Data Reported? 17
  - Oregon Shines II: A Revised Strategic Plan 18
  - Oregon Shines II Reduces Number of Benchmarks 19
- Uses of Oregon Benchmark Data 20
  - Counties Opt to Use Benchmark System 20
  - Benchmarks Aid in Educational Reform 21
  - Foundations Use Benchmarks to Make Funding Decisions 21
  - Benchmarks Can Be Used As a Budget Planning Tool 21
  - Benchmarks Are Not Meant to Measure Program Impact 21

OREGON COMMISSION ON CHILDREN AND FAMILIES 23
History of the Oregon Commission on Children and Families 23
HB 2004 Strengthens Local Role in Determining What Is Best for Children and Families 23
Lessons Learned from OCCF Effort: Citizen Input Valuable If Structured 24
Process of Identifying Goals and Indicators for OCCF 24
Comprehensive Local Plans Use Benchmarks to Evaluate Progress 24
Training and Technical Assistance Important to RBA Process 25
Uses of OCCF Benchmarks 26
Benchmarks Used in Contracting Process 26

THE OREGON OPTION 27
History of the Oregon Option 27
A Memorandum of Understanding Encourages Intergovernmental Cooperation 27
Process of Identifying Goals and Indicators for the Option 27
"Clusters" Are Developed to Tie Key Oregon Benchmarks to the Oregon Option 27
Support Teams Provide Critical Information for the Oregon Option 28

PERFORMANCE MEASURES DESIGNED TO ASSESS PROGRESS TOWARD ACHIEVING BENCHMARKS 31
History of the Development of Performance Measures 31
Process for the Identification of Performance Measures 31
State Budget Instructions Clarify What Performance Measures Should Be 31
Uses of Performance Measures 32
Performance Measures and the Oregon Benchmarks 32
The Adult and Family Services Division Shifts Focus 32
AFS Efforts Linked to Performance Measures and Benchmarks 32
AFS Efforts Tie into the Oregon Option 33

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP TEAM: SERVICE INTEGRATION AT THE LOCAL LEVEL 35
History of the CPT Effort 35
Process of Identifying Goals and Indicators for the CPT 35
Uses of the CPT Effort 36
How CPT Links Counties with Oregon Benchmarks 36

CONCLUSION: RBA IN OREGON STILL HAS A LONG WAY TO GO 37

KEY CONTACTS 39

OBJECTIVES, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY 41
Objectives 41
Scope 41
Methodology 41

INTRODUCTION

Background

Interest in planning and implementing new systems of holding child and family services accountable for results is growing rapidly — presenting both opportunities and challenges for policymakers, practitioners, and program managers. The Results-Based Accountability (RBA) Project at the Harvard Family Research Project (HFRP) has supported and built upon recent state efforts to develop these new accountability systems for child and family services.

Recent changes in welfare — with increasing responsibility at the state and local levels — have implications for these new RBA efforts. With welfare reform, states will be challenged to provide effective and efficient services for children and families with fewer resources. States have been given increased flexibility in the administration of programs, and it seems likely that they will be held more accountable for program results. In turn, many states are giving counties increased flexibility in administering these programs and plan to hold local service agencies responsible for results.

Most states are in the early stages of planning and implementing their RBA efforts. However, given the recent devolution of welfare as well as changes in managed care, these new accountability systems appear to be here to stay. While states have many promising approaches, they are finding a need for avenues to share resources and experiences, to learn about these new systems, and to obtain information about pioneering states' efforts. HFRP's RBA reports, including this case study, are intended to help share insights and experiences in designing and implementing RBA systems.

What Is Results-Based Accountability?

Policymakers, service providers, and citizens use the term "results-based accountability" in many different ways. For some, this term refers to strategic planning with an emphasis on greater coordination of services around goals and desired results. For others, the term is used to imply a shift in responsibility from the federal to state and local levels and the corresponding reduction in regulation or "red tape" — that is, it refers to a replacement of "process regulations" (such as requiring certain credentials for foster care case workers) with a requirement for results data (such as reduced case loads). For others, the term is used to refer to data collection and reporting efforts.

At a minimum, the RBA efforts described in this report include the following four elements:

- Articulation of a vision about where the state or community would like to be;
- Development of goals and objectives;

- Public reporting of data on progress toward goals and objectives; and
- Regular use of RBA process and data.

Description of the Series

This case study report is part of a series of reports of state RBA efforts. The series includes eight state case studies and a cross-site analysis. The reports are designed to provide information about the design and implementation of the RBA systems in these states. In addition, each case highlights the state's unique lessons learned. The points of distinction of the RBA efforts in each of the eight states in the series are summarized in Table 1 below:

Table 1. Points of Distinction of State RBA Efforts

State	Points of Distinction
Florida	Florida's RBA efforts consist of three parts: statewide benchmarks, performance-based budgeting, and agency-level strategic planning. Several aspects of Florida's efforts are notable: • The active support and involvement by a variety of stakeholders, including the legislature and the private sector; • The strong focus on training and technical assistance in the state, provided by the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget and the legislatively-mandated Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability; and • The target budget approach used in the Florida Department of Children and Families, which identifies specific outcomes for the different populations the department serves.
Georgia	Georgia's RBA efforts include three parts: benchmarks for children and families, agency performance budgeting, and decentralization of some social services to the local level in exchange for a focus on results. In addition, the following characteristics distinguish the RBA efforts in Georgia: • The top-down and bottom-up approach to RBA, which focuses a variety of stakeholders on results; • The early support by foundations to enable an emphasis on meaningful, people-level results; • The climate of change that supports risk-taking and innovation; and • The establishment of mechanisms to address concerns about locally-determined strategies and accountability as well as statewide oversight.
Iowa	Iowa's RBA efforts consist of statewide measures, agency performance measures, and local-level measures. In addition, the following characteristics distinguish the Iowa case: • The use of public opinion polling, which has provided valuable citizen input; • The use of focus groups to enhance the RBA research process; and • Enterprise-wide strategic planning, which provides a framework for collaborative efforts among agencies to achieve common cross-site goals.

Minnesota	Minnesota's RBA efforts consist of statewide measures, child and family measures, agency performance measures, and local performance measures. The following characteristics also distinguish Minnesota: • The existence of multiple RBA efforts with differing origins and emphases, including the Executive Branch Minnesota Milestones, which focus on population-level goals and the Legislature's performance accountability for state agencies; • The emphasis on "home grown" services, which leads to grassroots articulation and reporting of results data rather than a centralized RBA approach; and • The refinement of the Milestones and agency performance measures to build on lessons learned and to update the measures to reflect new priorities of the state's citizens.
North Carolina	North Carolina's RBA efforts consist of state agency performance budgeting, and a child and family initiative that focuses on results. In addition, the following characteristics in North Carolina are of note: • The role of the budget and planning offices in training, collecting, and analyzing performance budget data; • The political context in which the child and family initiative has been implemented and the way in which data have been used to expand this initiative; and • The quasi-experimental evaluation design used to measure the success of the child and family services initiative.
Ohio	Ohio's RBA efforts consist of a statewide framework for child and family services, decentralization of social services to the local level in exchange for a focus on results, and a state block grant and a new program that focus child and family services on results. In addition, the following elements in Ohio are noteworthy: • The strong commitment of the governor in supporting results-oriented child and family services; • Comprehensive planning efforts designed to streamline government services by focusing on results; • The greater flexibility given to county Councils in exchange for accountability that focuses on results; and • The messages from the state to the counties regarding state expectations to focus on results.

Oregon	Oregon's RBA efforts consist of a statewide framework for results, agency performance measures, and local measures. In addition, the following characteristics distinguish the efforts in Oregon: • The way in which Oregon has relied on champions as a critical element for success. Leaders in key places — the executive branch, legislature, and private sector — have all been crucial to the penetration of the concept of the Oregon Benchmarks; • The power of well-trained, highly qualified staff at all levels, which has been critical in designing the RBA effort; • The requirement that the Benchmarks and strategic plans be revisited on a regular basis; • Citizen involvement as an element in the success of the RBA effort; and • The continuity of support for RBA efforts at all levels of involvement.
Vermont	Vermont's RBA efforts consist of a framework for child and family outcomes, a Department of Education (DOE) outcomes framework, and measures produced by the Agency of Human Services and the DOE. In addition, the following characteristics are significant: • The importance of establishing relationships and knowing key actors in the design and implementation of the effort; • The small size of the state, which creates relative ease in involving all stakeholders in the effort; and • The importance of foundation funding and technical assistance in establishing the RBA framework and allowing the state to be creative in using resources to implement RBA.

Audience

This case study report is part of our larger effort to disseminate information about RBA initiatives in states. The report is targeted to those responsible for designing and implementing RBA efforts for child and family services. As such, the cases include details about the history, design, implementation, and uses of each effort that could assist in designing and implementing similar efforts.

Format

Overview of Oregon

The report begins with a brief overview which summarizes the key points in the case study.

Oregon Context

A section of sociodemographic information and information about the state's governance structure directs the reader to unique qualities of the state that have helped to influence its RBA work. In addition, a description of the history and state/local culture provides details about the environment.

Timeline
The report includes a timeline of the most critical events in the design and implementation of the RBA efforts.

Terms and Concepts
A list of the key terms and concepts used in the state is included. Currently no standard set of definitions of RBA terms exists. States use similar terms for different concepts, and different terms for similar concepts. Additionally, we provide a list of acronyms specific to each state's RBA efforts.

Description of Each of Oregon's RBA Efforts
Each separate RBA effort is described in detail in the case study. Each of these separate efforts is described in bold and begins a new chapter. Each section begins with a description of the history and impetus of the effort, including a description of those who initially sponsored the effort (such as the governor, legislature, or agency). We also describe the legal mechanism behind the effort (such as Executive Order, legislative mandate, etc.). In addition, the early champions and actors involved in each effort and the funding sources and resources that support the effort are noted. We also describe the governance and coordination between this effort and any others that may be in existence in the state.

The design and implementation of each effort are also described in detail. We include information about the planning of the effort (including a description of strategic planning efforts); the selection of goals, indicators, and targets; the collection of data; and the ways in which stakeholders were involved. In addition, we describe the state "infrastructure" that supports the effort, such as staff, computer resources, and training. Finally, where applicable, we describe the way in which program evaluation — specifically, outcome evaluation efforts — links to the RBA effort.

Each section also includes information about how each effort is being used. The uses include planning, citizen engagement, programming, budgeting and contracting, and communication. In certain instances, the uses have yet to be determined.

Key Contacts
A list of key contacts familiar with different aspects of the effort is provided. This list is included in order to direct the reader to the experts who are most knowledgeable about many of the details of this report.

Objectives, Scope, and Methodology
This section explains in detail the objectives of the study, the methodology used, and the range of states included in the series.

OVERVIEW OF OREGON

Unique Features of Oregon's RBA Efforts

Oregon is widely viewed as the state that is the farthest along in designing and implementing results-based accountability (RBA). Since 1989, Oregon has been striving to achieve an integrated system of accountability that stresses the importance of local, state, and federal involvement. The following characteristics distinguish the efforts in Oregon:

- The way in which Oregon has relied on champions as a critical element for success. Leaders in key places — the executive branch, legislature, and private sector — have all been key to the penetration of the concept of the Oregon Benchmarks;
- The power of well-trained, highly qualified staff at all levels, which has been critical in designing the RBA effort;
- The requirement that the Benchmarks and strategic plans be revisited on a regular basis;
- Citizen involvement as an element in the success of the RBA effort; and
- The continuity of support for RBA efforts at all levels of involvement.

Summary of Oregon's RBA Efforts

The Oregon Benchmarks: The Oregon Benchmarks effort grew out of the state's strategic vision, *Oregon Shines: An Economic Strategy for the Pacific Century.*[1] Championed by then-Governor Neil Goldschmidt, RBA was central to the 20-year strategic plan outlined in *Oregon Shines*. To ensure that the strategies proposed in *Oregon Shines* were initiated and monitored, the strategic plan concluded by calling for the establishment of an independent state planning board — the Oregon Progress Board (OPB). The recommendation was signed into law by the legislature in 1989. OPB's first task was to solicit citizen input to determine a set of benchmarks for the state's three priority areas: stable families, quality of life, and a strong economy. In 1991, the OPB recommended 160 Benchmarks to the state legislature; by 1994, their number had grown to 259. In 1996, the state revised its strategic plan, again soliciting input from hundreds of civic and business leaders. In response to the changing economic and social conditions, the revised strategic plan prompted the OPB to reduce the number of Benchmarks to the 92 currently in use in Oregon. Although the original list of 259 Benchmarks was comprehensive and reflected citizen input, the shorter list, using more stringent criteria, proved more manageable. Benchmarks are revisited every five years; doing so ensures that they continue accurately to reflect citizen concerns as well as the changing needs of Oregon's human service and economic conditions.

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[1] Oregon Department of Economic Development. (1989). *Oregon Shines: An economic strategy for the Pacific Century. (1989).* Salem, OR: Author.

Oregon Commission on Children and Families: The Oregon Commission on Children and Families (OCCF) sets statewide policies for services to children and families in collaboration with state and local partners. One of the key features of the OCCF effort is that it calls for community-based comprehensive plans to provide services for children and families. Signed into law in 1993, the OCCF represents a shift in Oregon state government from focusing on family liabilities, to drawing on family strengths when providing human services. County commissions must identify at least four Benchmarks and develop a plan to achieve them at the local level within a specified length of time. OCCF monitors each county's progress and provides technical assistance where necessary to ensure that Benchmarks are being achieved. In keeping with Oregon's commitment to citizen participation in government, the majority of the OCCF's members are lay citizens.

Oregon Option: The Oregon Option represents the first reworking of the federal/state relationship; it is a demonstration project that has allowed for the design and testing of a results-based approach to delivering government services across federal, state, and local lines. The Option is a full-scale effort to empower communities to identify local needs, to make decisions about how to address those needs, and to be accountable for the results. The Option originated in 1994, when Oregon and the federal government agreed to restructure intergovernmental relationships to focus on measurable results. At the crux of the agreement is a commitment to use the Oregon Benchmarks across local, state, and federal efforts. Oregon's unique relationship with the federal government developed, in part, because of the state's well-established RBA system, including its clear articulation of Benchmarks.

Performance Measures: In 1993, legislation was passed giving the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) responsibility for ensuring that agency activities, including the establishment of performance measures, were aimed toward achieving Benchmarks. The DAS has developed state budget instructions that clarify how to determine performance measures that accurately reflect an agency's mission, as well as relate to obtainable benchmark data. The Adult and Family Services Division of the Department of Human Resources (DHR) is highlighted in this section as a good example of how an agency has aligned its performance measures with the Oregon Benchmarks.

Community Partnership Team: The DHR has taken a leadership role in service integration since 1991; in 1995, the DHR institutionalized its service integration efforts with the establishment of a new work unit, the Community Partnership Team (CPT). The purpose of the CPT is to promote locally integrated services while supporting the DHR's goals and outcomes. The most important function of the CPT is to help communities develop service strategies aligning human services at the state and local levels. Currently, CPT works with 39 service integration projects in 35 of Oregon's 36 counties. Using the structure provided by the Benchmarks, CPT brings partners from the state and local level together to decide on desired human service outcomes and to determine strategies to achieve them.

OREGON BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Sociodemographic and Economic Status[2]

In 1995, Oregon had a population of 3.2 million. Approximately 90 percent of its residents were Caucasian; 4 percent were Hispanic; and only 2 percent were African-American. Other ethnic minorities represented included Native Americans, Asians, and Pacific Islanders. Based on 1990 census data, 5 percent of Oregon's residents were immigrants. In 1995, 25 percent of Oregon's residents were under the age of 18, which was just lower than the national average of 26.2 percent.

In 1995, Oregon's per capita income was $21,611; the median income of families with children was $36,800. Eleven percent of all Oregonians, and 16 percent of all children under the age of 18 lived in poverty. In 1995, the unemployment rate in Oregon was 5.5 percent, which was close to the U.S. rate of 5.3 percent, ranking Oregon 11th in statewide unemployment.

Political Context for Children and Families[3]

Oregon's governor, John A. Kitzhaber (D), began his term in 1995 and, if re-elected, can hold two consecutive four-year terms. Oregon has a predominantly Republican legislature; both the House and Senate are currently controlled by the Republican party; however, historically, Oregon has been a Democratic state. Like other states in this series, Oregon's legislature is considered to be "hybrid," in between full- and part-time;[4] it meets biennially, in odd years, with no limit on length of session. Both the House and Senate have term limits of three terms and two terms, respectively.

In Oregon, all child and family services, including the disbursement of Medicaid and welfare funds, are administered at the state level. The county boards of commissioners have no jurisdiction over allocation of state and federal funding for child and family programs. State

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[2] Information for this section was obtained from the following sources: Morgan, K.O., and Morgan, S. (1997). *State rankings, 1997: A statistical overview of the 50 United States*. Lawrence, KS: Morgan Quinto Press; U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Current population survey* and *state poverty rates,* online at www.census.gov; U.S. Department of Labor, *Bureau of Labor statistics*; *statistical abstract of the United States, 1996.* Bureau of the Census, U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration. (116th Edition). *KIDS COUNT data book: State profiles of child well-being.* (1997). Baltimore, MD: Annie E. Casey Foundation. Most data are from 1995. Data from the *KIDS COUNT data book* reflect the condition of children and families in 1994.

[3] Information for this section was obtained from multiple sources, including: *The book of states, 1996-1997.* Lexington, KY: The Council of State Government; U.S. Term Limits, online at www.termlimits.org; and interviews with members of state, county, and local officials.

[4] Defined by Karl Kurtz of the National Conference of State Legislatures as having a small staff, with low pay, and a high turnover. See *Understanding the diversity of American state legislatures, extension of remarks.* (June 1992).

programs are delivered by the counties, however, and so there is cooperation between state and local branches of government.

Oregon ranks 21st based on a composite ranking of indicators of child well-being.[5] Table 2, a selected listing of the child risk factors, illustrates this rating.

Table 2. Child Risk Factors

Rating	Year	State	U.S.
% of two-year olds who were immunized	1995	71%	75%
% of children in extreme poverty (below 50% FPL)	1994	6%	9%
% of 4th grade students who scored below basic reading level	1994	NA	41%
% of 4th grade students who scored below basic math level	1996	35%	38%
% of low birth-weight babies	1994	5.3%	7.3%
% of teen birth rate (births per 1,000 females ages 15-17)	1994	30%	38%

Local Culture [6]

Oregon is a relatively young state whose inhabitants, for the most part, are homogeneous. Traditionally, agriculture and forestry have been the main components of the state's economy; recently, tourism has become a third and important source of revenue. Oregon's population has declined since the 1980s, partly as a result of emigration due to a depressed economy. The slow economy may reflect Oregon's desire to maintain the traditional, uncrowded nature of the state by discouraging population growth and economic expansion. The state song, *Oregon, My Oregon*, accurately captures the strong feelings of loyalty and protection that Oregonians have for their state. The same spirit that resists economic expansion in the interest of preserving the state's landscape, champions environmental legislation. As early as the 1970s, Oregon's legislature was addressing issues of air and water pollution and establishing mandatory conservation of land and resources.

Oregonians are noted for their independence. Towns and cities have home rule (that is, the right to choose their own form of local government), and since 1973, counties have had the right to extensive home-rule authority. Oregon, like Minnesota (See *Aiming for Accountability:*

[5] KIDS COUNT, a project of the Annie E. Casey Foundation, is a national and state-by-state effort to track the status of children in the United States. *KIDS COUNT data book: State profiles of child well-being.* (1997). Baltimore: Annie E. Casey Foundation. This publication provides data on the educational, social, economic, and physical well-being of children.

[6] Information for this section was compiled from Encyclopaedia Britannica Online, Encyclopedia Americana, and Elazar, D.J. (1984). *American federalism: A view from the states* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: Crowell, as well as from key informant interviews.

Minnesota), has a moralistic political culture.[7] It emphasizes the state as a commonwealth, with every citizen sharing both the resources of the state and the responsibility of running it. In Oregon, this attitude is reflected in the high level of amateur involvement in politics, as well as the exceptional power allotted to the voting public.[8]

[7] See Elazar, D.J. (1972). *American federalism: A view from the states*, 2nd edition. New York: Crowell.

[8] Voters in Oregon have the right to recall, or remove, elected officials, as well as initiate and vote upon statues and constitutional revisions.

TIMELINE

1989	• Oregon Progress Board established
1990	• First set of Oregon Benchmarks developed
1993	• HB2004 passed, establishing the Oregon Commission on Children and Families • HB1130 passed, establishing the Department of Administrative Services as lead agency to implement statewide use of performance measures
1994	• 259 Benchmarks published • Oregon Option created through a *Memorandum of Understanding* with the federal government
1995	• First *Oregon Benchmark Performance Report: Key Indicators of Progress from 1990-1995* published • Community Partnership Team charged with promoting locally integrated services for children and families • *Oregon Shines* Task Force established to revisit Benchmarks
1996	• *Oregon Shines II: Updating Oregon's Strategic Plan* published

TERMS AND CONCEPTS

Currently no standard set of definitions of RBA terms exists. States use similar terms for different concepts, and different terms for similar concepts. Table 3 describes the terms and concepts used by Florida. Table 4 summarizes the acronyms used in this report.

Table 3. Key Concepts

Vision: Expressed in *Oregon Shines*, the state vision is the broad, comprehensive statement of the purpose of the state
Benchmarks: Desired end result, generally after three or more years, and the specific and measurable target for accomplishing a goal

Table 4. Key Acronyms

AFDC:	Aid to Families with Dependent Children
AFS:	Adult and Family Services Division of the Department of Human Resources
CPT:	Community Partnership Team
DAS:	Department of Administrative Services
DHR:	Department of Human Resources
HB:	House Bill
MOU:	Memorandum of Understanding
OCCF:	Oregon Commission on Children and Families
OPB:	Oregon Progress Board (also referred to as Progress Board)
RBA:	Results-Based Accountability
SB:	Senate Bill

OREGON BENCHMARKS EXPRESS STATE VISION

The Oregon Benchmarks are a set of 92 measurable outcomes that express the state's priorities in the areas of promoting family stability, enhancing the quality of life for all Oregonians, and building a strong economy. Benchmarks are revisited every five years to ensure that they reflect the state's current priorities.

History of Oregon Benchmarks Effort

The Oregon Benchmarks effort began in 1989, when then-Governor Neal Goldschmidt began to champion the idea of developing an RBA system. Because of his personal commitment to focusing the government on results, he initiated a process involving hundreds of citizens that resulted in the development of a 20-year comprehensive strategic plan entitled *Oregon Shines: An Economic Strategy for the Pacific Century*.[9] At the crux of the plan was the desire to "provide an economic base that enriches all aspects of Oregon life."[10] To that end, the plan outlined three key areas in which Oregon should distinguish itself: 1) a superior workforce; 2) an attractive quality of life; and 3) an international frame of mind.

To ensure that the strategies set forth in *Oregon Shines* were implemented and monitored, the strategic plan concluded by recommending the establishment of the Oregon Progress Board (OPB), an independent state planning board composed of leading citizens and chaired by the governor. In 1989, the legislature followed through on this recommendation by passing legislation that authorized the creation of the OPB (See the OPB's Web site, http://www.econ.state.or.us/opb/sb285.html, for the details of this legislation).[11] The OPB was given the responsibility of translating the state strategic plan, *Oregon Shines,* into Benchmarks. In Oregon, Benchmarks are described as "vital signs...a checklist of Oregon's social, economic, and environmental health."[12] As such, Benchmarks have targets set in five-year intervals and, where possible, are measured yearly using data from multiple sources including: state and federal census statistics, the Oregon Population Survey, and tests designed for specific target populations.[13]

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[9] This strategic plan has been modified in recent years, but the major principles have had the support of the subsequent two governors — Barbara Roberts and John Kitzhaber.

[10] Oregon Department of Economic Development. (1989). *Oregon Shines: An economic strategy for the Pacific Century.*

[11] Although the original legislation that authorized the Progress Board was allowed to sunset in 1995, the Board existed for two years under the Governor's Executive Order. In the 1997 Legislative session, the Progress Board was established as a permanent advisory board.

[12] Oregon Progress Board. (1996). *Governing for results: Using Benchmarks to define and measure progress strategic priorities.* Salem, OR: Author.

[13] The Oregon Progress Board has recently published a data directory documenting the sources of all Oregon Benchmark data. It be obtained from the Oregon Progress Board, 775 Summer Street NE, Salem, OR 97310.

Process of Identifying Benchmarks

Citizen Input Helps Translate Vision into Benchmarks

In 1990, the Oregon Benchmarks were established through a broad participatory process intended to get people to focus on a shared vision. With the help of many citizen steering committees and the contributions of more than 200 organizations and individuals statewide, the Progress Board developed, refined, and adopted 160 Benchmarks, which they recommended to the 1991 Legislature. By 1994, their number had grown to 259. Although a complete listing of the Benchmarks is out of the scope of this document,[14] 15 core Benchmarks, organized around three main areas, were identified to represent the most crucial elements in Oregon's strategy (See Table 5).

Table 5. 15 Core Benchmarks, 1995 [15]

Core Benchmarks Summary
Promote Family Stability, Capable People • Reduce percentage of children living in poverty; • Reduce the incidence of child abuse, • Reduce the incidence of teen pregnancy; • Reduce years of potential life lost; • Raise student skill achievement; • Increase the percentage of high school graduates among the adult population; • Increase the percentage of those with baccalaureate degrees; and • Raise the literacy rate of adults.
Enhance Quality of Life, and the Environment • Reduce crime rates; • Keep housing affordable; • Improve air and groundwater quality; and • Preserve agricultural and forest lands, and wetlands.
Promote a Strong, Diverse Economy • Raise per capita income relative to U.S. per capita income; • Raise per capita income by racial and ethnic group; and • Maintain or increase employment outside the Portland area.

[14] For the complete list, see Oregon Progress Board. (1994). *Oregon Benchmarks, report to the 1995 Legislature.* Salem, OR: Author.

[15] Oregon Progress Board. (1994). *Oregon Benchmarks, report to the 1995 legislature.* Salem, OR: Author.

How Are Benchmark Data Reported?

Benchmark data are collected by the OPB. At the end of 1996, the first *Oregon Benchmark Performance Report: Key Indicators of Progress from 1990-1995,*[16] was released. The report showed Oregon's progress from 1990 to 1995 in three areas: people, quality of life, and the economy. The report focused primarily on the 10 priority Benchmarks that were tracked continuously for the five-year period, although data are presented on an additional 40 Benchmarks. The report listed Benchmarks relative to their goals, compared the actual data to the 1995 target, assigned a grade to the amount of progress (letter grades A through F), and showed the trend in the movement of the benchmark. Grades were determined using the following formula:

$$\frac{\text{actual 1995 data minus actual 1990 data}}{\text{target 1995 minus actual 1990 data}} = \text{grade}$$

This formula indicates how much progress Oregon actually made as a percentage of the progress the state had hoped to make in order to achieve its 1995 target. Letter grades were assigned based on the following scale:

A: Met or exceeded target (100%+)
B: Significant progress toward target (67%-99%)
C: Some progress toward target (34%-66%)
D: Little or no progress toward target (0%-33%)
F: Opposite direction from target (-%)

Table 6 offers examples of 1995 goals and results from the *Benchmark Performance Report.*

[16] Oregon Progress Board. (December 1996). *Oregon's Benchmark performance report: Key indicators of progress, 1990-1995.* Salem, OR: Author.

Table 6. Oregon Benchmark Performance Report, 1996 [17]

Goal	Grade	Benchmark	1995 Data	1995 Target	Trend
Increase per capita income relative to the U.S.	A	*Oregon's income per capita as a percentage of U.S. income*	95%	95%	Improving
Increase the share of Oregonians with health insurance	B	*Percentage of Oregonians with health insurance*	88%	90%	Improving
Improve student reading and math skills	C	*Percentage of 11th grade students who achieve established skill levels in reading and math*	Rdng: 85% Math: 62%	Rdng: 83% Math: 74%	Reading: Improving Math: Worsening
Reduce teenage pregnancy	D	*Teenage pregnancy rate per 1,000 females age 10-17*	19.2	9.8	Slight improvement
Reduce crime	F	*Overall reported crimes per 1,000 Oregonians*	151	127	Worsening

Also included in the report are comments on what might account for the trends, as well as information on what the data related to each benchmark look like at the national level. Of the 50 Benchmarks listed in the report, over 40 percent received a grade of B or above, while 24 percent received an F. The overall indication is that conditions in Oregon, as measured by the Benchmarks, improved from 1990 to 1995. However, the report clearly indicated that while Oregon had made strides in its economic conditions both at home and internationally, the condition of Oregon's families had worsened (as reflected by the low "grades" for teen pregnancy and crime reduction highlighted in Table 6).

Oregon Shines II: A Revised Strategic Plan

In April 1996, Governor Kitzhaber formed the Governor's *Oregon Shines* Task Force to work with the OPB to determine what had been accomplished since the first strategic plan was developed, and to make recommendations on how the plan should be changed to accommodate the new conditions in Oregon. The Task Force received input from hundreds of civic and business leaders around the state, looked at trends in the economy and society, and examined the Benchmarks that had been developed to chart progress toward the goals laid out in *Oregon Shines*. According to the *Oregon Benchmarks Performance Report*, the high unemployment and falling incomes that led to the development of the original state strategic plan, *Oregon Shines*,

[17] Oregon Progress Board. *Oregon's Benchmark performance report: Key indicators of progress, 1990-1995.*

had improved, yet there was concern that the economic expansion might have exacerbated some social problems and threatened the quality of life for Oregonians. Four factors were identified as crucial to ensuring Oregon's continued success:

- A value-adding, diversified, export-driven economy;
- Public and private investment in education, infrastructure, and social support;
- Strong community-based partnerships focused on achieving outcomes; and
- A new vision for the natural resource-based sectors of the economy.

Mindful of these factors, the Task Force recommended a shift in the original *Oregon Shines* goals toward greater emphasis on the well-being of families and communities and the condition of their surroundings. The revised *Oregon Shines II* strategic goals are:

- Quality jobs for all Oregonians;
- Safe, caring, and engaged communities; and
- Healthy and sustainable surroundings.

These revised goals shift the work of the OPB from thinking globally about Oregon's place in the international economy, to thinking more locally about what is best for Oregon's families.[18]

Oregon Shines II Reduces Number of Benchmarks

With the revision of the strategic plan came a modification of the Benchmarks. The original set of 259 Oregon Benchmarks was established through a broad participatory process intended to get people to focus on the shared vision of *Oregon Shines*. As one informant stated, "part of the process [had] to be to pull real people, real citizens, into it." However, although the 1996 Task Force acknowledged that the 259 Benchmarks "[were] a powerful tool for guiding Oregon toward its vision," they found room for improvement. The Task Force worked with the OPB to reduce the number of Benchmarks to a more manageable list. The reduced number of Benchmarks reflects the Progress Board's new acceptance criteria: Benchmarks must emphasize results, be measurable, be flexible enough to allow modifications, be comprehensible, and be comparable to a selected outside standard.

Currently, there are 92 Benchmarks nested within the three broad goals of the new strategic plan. Benchmarks that address state economic performance and education fall under the *quality jobs goal*; Benchmarks that address social support, public safety, and civic involvement relate to the *goal of safe, caring, and engaged communities* (covering most of the Benchmarks that directly pertain to children and families); and finally, community development and environment Benchmarks pertain to the *healthy and sustainable surroundings goal* (See Table 7 for examples of Benchmark areas that pertain to each goal).

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[18] Oregon Progress Board and the Governor's *Oregon Shines* Task Force. (1997). *Oregon Shines II: Updating Oregon's strategic plan, highlights. 1997.* Salem, OR: Author.

Table 7. Sample Benchmark Areas for Each Strategic Goal, 1997 [19]

Goal 1:	**Quality Jobs for All Oregonians** **Benchmarks:** • Eighth grade reading/math skills; • Oregonians with Bachelor's degrees; • Industry research and development spending; and • Per capita income relative to the United States.
Goal 2:	**Safe, Caring, and Engaged Communities** **Benchmarks:** • High school dropout rate; • Eighth grade use of alcohol, illicit drugs, and cigarettes; • Incomes below 100% of federal poverty line; and • Overall reported crime.
Goal 3:	**Healthy, Sustainable Surroundings** **Benchmarks:** • Urban highway congestion; • Forest, agricultural, and wetlands preservation; • Air quality; and • Salmon/steelhead populations.

In addition to the 92 Benchmarks, the Progress Board identified a list of 26 "developmental Benchmarks"— that is, indicators for which data are not currently available, but if data were to become available, would greatly enhance Oregon's ability to track outcomes. For example, the list of developmental Benchmarks includes, "percentage of work applications that meet employment criteria for the job"; while this information is currently not recorded, doing so might enhance Oregon's understanding of unemployment and job training.

Uses of Oregon Benchmark Data

Counties Opt to Use Benchmark System

The concept of the Benchmarks has been adopted quite broadly in the state, even among those who are not mandated to establish them. On a voluntary basis, a number of local governments have conducted a benchmarking process similar to that at the state level. Some of the Benchmarks are Oregon Benchmarks, while others reflect the concerns specific to each county. For example, in Multnomah County, a number of County Commissioners and other elected officials and managers, as well as a Citizen Involvement Committee, worked to generate the list of Benchmarks at the county level.[20]

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[19] Oregon Progress Board and the Governor's *Oregon Shines* Task Force. (1997). *Oregon Shines II: Updating Oregon's strategic plan, highlights. 1997.* Salem, OR: Author.

[20] See Oregon Progress Board Web site for additional examples of county-level Benchmark data: (www.econ.state.or.us/opb).

Benchmarks Aid in Educational Reform

The state education reform efforts, directed by the state Department of Education, are also related to the Benchmarks. For example, the education reform legislation, the Oregon Education Act for the 21st Century, revised in 1995, states that by the year 2000, Oregon will have the best educated citizens in the nation and by the year 2010, the state will have an international-quality workforce, a goal of the benchmark system. The Department of Education activities have their origins in the Oregon Action Plan for Excellence, which began in 1984. This plan defines essential learning skills and common curriculum goals, and establishes a criteria-based system to assess children and report results by school. The Goals 2000 plan submitted to the Federal government by Oregon makes explicit mention of achievement of the Benchmarks as a goal.

Foundations Use Benchmarks to Make Funding Decisions

Two of the largest foundations in Oregon, the Oregon Community Foundation and the Meyer Memorial Trust, distribute funds using the Benchmarks. In addition, a statewide advocacy organization focusing on the needs of children and families, Children First for Oregon, publishes a yearly report of county data on the status of Oregon's Children. The data on indicators of concern to child advocates are presented for each county and are compared to the status of the corresponding Oregon Benchmark. The 1996 report articulates the organization's commitment to the Benchmarks: "Many of the Benchmarks are focused on child and family well-being, and these are the indicators to which Children First pays closest attention."[21]

Benchmarks Can Be Used as a Budget Planning Tool

The Benchmarks have been used as a budget planning tool to help make decisions about how to prioritize spending. For example, when the state faced a budget shortfall in 1993, every agency had to submit a budget with a 20 percent cut in expenditures. Agencies that were able to show that their programs were aligned with a Benchmark were subject to cuts of only 13 percent. However, although Benchmarks have been used as a budgeting tool, results data from specific programs are rarely the basis for funding decisions.

Benchmarks Are Not Meant to Measure Program Impact

Finally, it is important to note what the Benchmarks do not do. They are not designed to measure the impact of specific programs. Instead, the state uses the Benchmarks to determine if programs are aligned with the state's priorities, rather than as a way of measuring whether programs are meeting specified goals. Policymakers and providers use information from the biannual Benchmarks reports to assess priorities. Agencies and programs use Benchmarks to refocus their missions and develop agency-level measures. For example, the welfare program has changed its focus from a disbursement agency to an agency responsible for reducing poverty and welfare caseloads; this represents a shift from looking at money spent to examining performance in terms of reductions in welfare caseloads.

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[21] Children First for Oregon. (1996). *County data for community action: 1996 Status of Oregon's children.* Salem, OR: Author.

OREGON COMMISSION ON CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

The Oregon Commission on Children and Families (OCCF), created in 1993 as an outgrowth of the Oregon Community Children and Youth Services Commission, sets state policy for children and families in conjunction with state and local partners. It consists of 14 members, 12 of whom are appointed by the governor. The majority of members are lay citizens. The OCCF represents an attempt to focus the efforts of the 32 state agencies that administer 242 different programs for children, youth, and families. The Director of the Department of Human Resources (DHR) and the State Superintendent of Public Instruction are required by law to be members of the OCCF.

History of the Oregon Commission on Children and Families

Established through the signing of House Bill 2004 (HB2004) by Governor Barbara Roberts, the OCCF represents a shift in thinking about how to serve children and families. "Rather than focusing only on the deficits and liabilities, which is what human service personnel have traditionally done, [the focus is now on] promoting the wellness of Oregon's children and families."[22] This focus on wellness represents an important lesson learned from the Community Children and Youth Services experience.

OCCF has four major responsibilities:

- To assume a leadership role by developing and sustaining the wellness model, and building new resources and partnerships to help in transferring some responsibilities to counties;
- To ensure that the system works by using Benchmarks to set priorities, policies, standards, and accountability mechanisms that are applicable statewide;
- To oversee county commissions, reviewing and approving or denying local plans and granting waivers to counties as needed; and
- To promote innovations in local projects and provide research, technical assistance, and training to communities to help them build capacity to carry out their work.

HB 2004 Strengthens Local Role in Determining What Is Best for Children and Families
The philosophy behind HB2004 is that, given the diversity of Oregon's communities statewide, strategies for achieving outcomes are best developed and achieved at the local level through partnerships with the state. In recognition of this diversity, local commissions on children and families have been created in each of the state's 36 counties. They are responsible for redesigning the child and family service delivery systems in each of the counties according to the county characteristics and needs. These local commissions are appointed by the county commissioners and are required to include at least eight members and a chair; the majority of local children and family commission members must be laypersons. The rationale for staffing the local commissions with non-professionals was best explained by one informant as, "When

[22] House Bill 2004.

you give local control to non-professionals, they will sometimes do the damnedest things, and that's okay that they do the damnedest things."

There is a great deal of variety in the local commissions: Their organizational structure; their membership; their relationships to service providers in the county; and the way in which they use Benchmarks and disburse money all differ. However, under the law, all local commissions have four major categories of responsibility. First, they must *develop a comprehensive plan* for all children's services in their county. Second, local commissions must *distribute state and federal funds* to purchase children's services. Where possible, they must form financial partnerships for service delivery and must evaluate programs based on how well they meet the needs of the local comprehensive plan. Third, the local commissions must *create a child-friendly community through the forming of partnerships*, developing local resources, developing local abilities to help families, and advocating for children's issues. Finally, local commissions must *ensure that services are available and accessible* to all eligible residents.

Lessons Learned from OCCF Effort: Citizen Input Valuable If Structured
Informants noted the importance of inviting lay citizens to serve on local commissions but cautioned that without proper structure to their roles, they can impede rather than enhance the work at the local level. It takes time for new members to "come up to speed" with commission work. To avoid duplication of efforts, an initial orientation process that both describes the work of the commission to date, as well as outlines the role of commission members, might eliminate the sometimes lengthy process of bringing new members on board.

Process of Identifying Goals and Indicators for OCCF

Comprehensive Local Plans Use Benchmarks to Evaluate Progress
One of the key features of the OCCF effort is that it is a *comprehensive community-based plan* for children and families. As one informant stated, "A strength of what we do is that we are unarguably citizen and community driven. That's politically important." OCCF provides guidelines to county commissions for the development of their comprehensive plan in a comprehensive planning guide.[23] Suggested participants in the planning process include family members of all ages; providers and educators; human service advocates; state and local agencies; service recipients; county officials; religious organization representatives; business leaders; and representatives of all communities in the area. OCCF views comprehensive planning as a seven-step process:

- A definition of wellness as a goal of all efforts;
- "Community mapping," or needs assessment, to identify strengths;
- The selection of Benchmarks as measurements of success;

[23] Oregon Commission on Children and Families. (1994). *Communities investing in the future: 1994 comprehensive planning guide.* Salem, OR: Author.

- The articulation of directions (short-term goals) and tools (specific actions) necessary to achieve selected Benchmarks;
- The identification of potential partners to implement tools;
- The development of evaluation and monitoring procedures; and
- A preliminary budget for implementation, including consideration of potential collaborative efforts.

Integral to the comprehensive planning stage for each local commission is the identification of Benchmarks that will assist the commission in evaluating its county's progress. To assist counties in the Benchmark selection process, the OCCF developed a list of core Benchmarks that the commission feels reflect the most urgent needs of children and families at the county level. From this list, the OCCF also identified four lead Benchmarks that all counties should address in the next five years (beginning in 1995). The OCCF asked local commissions to focus on at least one core benchmark in their 1993-1995 planning cycle (See Table 8 for OCCF core Benchmarks).

Table 8. OCCF Core Benchmarks (as of 1993)[24]

OCCF Core Benchmarks

- Increase the percentage of babies whose mothers receive adequate prenatal care;
- Decrease the pregnancy rate per 1000 females ages 10-17;
- Decrease the number of children abused or neglected per 1000 persons under age 18;
- Increase the percentage of children entering kindergarten meeting specific developmental standards for their age;
- Increase the number of identified child care slots;
- Increase the high school graduation rate;
- Reduce the juvenile crime rate;
- Increase the percentage of eighth grade students free from tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs in the previous month;
- Increase the percentage of eleventh grade students free from tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs in the previous month;
- Increase the percentage of families living above 100% of federal poverty line; and
- Increase the percentage of families who are able to care for their own children (as measured by the number of families whose children are not in substitute care).

Training and Technical Assistance Important to RBA Process

Local commissions have received a wide range of training and technical assistance provided by the OCCF on a regular basis. For example, two to three times a year, the OCCF sponsors a symposium for representatives from local commissions to share information on best practices. The structure and agenda of the symposium are based on the needs of the local Commission members. Most of the training is provided by the OCCF staff, but some is provided by consultants when a critical need is identified that requires outside expertise. The technical

[24] Oregon Commission on Children and Families. *Comprehensive planning guide: Communities investing in the future: 1994.*

assistance topics that are covered include information about OCCF policies and requirements, information about the process of designing and implementing the local council structure, using and expanding technology, learning facilitation skills, and understanding the legislative process.

The OCCF also provides each local commission with its Members Handbook, which includes critical information for implementing the OCCF activities.[25] For example, the Handbook includes background information on each benchmark; information about how to select Benchmarks; sample Requests for Proposals to local service providers, which require linking activities to Benchmarks; and sample reporting forms. This Handbook is regularly updated to incorporate information that is needed by the local commissions.

Uses of OCCF Benchmarks

Local commissions on children and families use the Benchmarks primarily as a tool to help prioritize contracting decisions. Some local commissions also use the Benchmarks in the Request for Proposal process. The communities receive grant streams connected with broad outcomes. Typically, after they have done their needs assessments and determined strategies to achieve the broad Benchmark outcomes, local communities work with local providers to create programs to help achieve the outcomes. Often, communities choose just one broad outcome (benchmark) and then define a set of short-term indicators of progress toward that outcome. The latter are used in negotiating contracts with providers who agree to achieve the defined indicators, related to a benchmark, for both the short- and long term. In Clackamas, for example, the provider must prove a connection to a benchmark in order to receive a contract. One county informant expressed the attitude that, "If they say, 'We're such small potatoes; we can't make any difference,' then we're going to start to say, 'Well, we're not going to fund you. We'll encourage you, but if you can't show this connectedness to the final outcome, *then why are we putting our money in here?*' "

Benchmarks Used in Contracting Process

OCCF carefully reviews each county's progress. Local commissions send their indicators to the state commission for approval as part of the contracting process with local providers. Local commissions are required to monitor and evaluate services that they fund to assure that contracts are in compliance with OCCF protocols. Quality is assessed through site visits where the effectiveness of services for children and families is evaluated. Monitoring and evaluation guidelines are provided to communities in the *Outcome Measures Notebook*.[26] Six-month reports are due to OCCF from each county in mid-February, at which time the OCCF attempts to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the counties' efforts. If the OCCF identifies a problem, they first examine whether the defined indicators were a good match for the chosen benchmark. If not, OCCF offers technical assistance in matching indicators to outcomes.

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[25] Oregon Commission on Children and Families. (1993). *Member handbook and orientation manual*. Salem, OR: Author.

[26] Oregon Commission on Children and Families. (1993). *Member handbook and orientation manual*. Salem, OR: Author.

THE OREGON OPTION

The Oregon Option represents the first reworking of the federal/state relationship; it is a demonstration project that has allowed for the design and testing of a results-based approach to delivering government services across federal, state, and local lines. The Option is a full-scale effort to empower communities to identify local needs, make decisions about how to address those needs, and to be accountable for the results.

History of the Oregon Option

A Memorandum of Understanding Encourages Intergovernmental Cooperation
At the end of 1994, Oregon and the federal government entered into a legal partnership — a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)[27] — to work to reconstruct intergovernmental relationships to focus on measurable results rather than on compliance with process requirements. The MOU is very general in its language, allowing for flexibility and learning during implementation of the Option. The vision for the redesigned system that results from the Option is a system that is:

- Structured, managed, and evaluated based on results (defined as progress in achieving Benchmarks);
- Focused on customer needs and satisfaction, particularly through integration of services;
- Based on the principle of prevention rather than remediation; and
- Simplified and integrated, delegating responsibility for services (design, delivery, and results) to front-line, local service providers.

In the MOU, federal and state partners agree to work together to "1) identify Benchmarks, strategies, and measures that provide a framework for improved intergovernmental service delivery and 2) undertake efforts to identify and eliminate barriers to achieving program results."[28] As one informant stated, "The idea of the Option is to say: Let's get focused on results, and if we as a state or a community within a state can present a series of strategies that will achieve the results, we want the flexibility to figure out how to get them done."

Process of Identifying Goals and Indicators for the Option

"Clusters" are Developed to Tie Key Oregon Benchmarks to the Oregon Option
Shortly before the Oregon Option became official at a White House ceremony in December 1994, a pivotal conference took place in which more than 100 federal, state, and regional staff

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[27] For a copy of the MOU, see *The Oregon Option, a report to the Annie E. Casey Foundation* (1994). Baltimore, MD: Annie E. Casey Foundation.

[28] Macy, C.H. *The Oregon Option.*

met to work through their different ideas about what the Oregon Option might accomplish. A lasting outcome of the conference was the development of *clusters*, intergovernmental working groups, each focusing on a specific content area. The first three clusters formed were Healthy Children, Workforce, and Family Stability. As the work got under way, numerous new initiatives were undertaken on issues ranging from employment for people with disabilities to child nutrition.

The three initial clusters began to articulate a mission, identify Benchmarks relevant to their content area, and to identify barriers that were inhibiting progress in these areas. At first, the clusters attempted to influence 27 of the Oregon Benchmarks. They eventually realized that the limitations of staffing and time availability necessitated a focus on fewer goals. They decided that they would focus on Benchmarks that had already seen progress so that the Option could serve as a "catalyst for further advances." (See Table 9 for example).[29]

Table 9. Mission Statement and Benchmarks for Healthy Families Cluster[30]

HEALTHY FAMILIES
Mission Statement: To make Oregon a place where children grow up in strong, stable families and have access to pediatric health care, early childhood education, and quality child care.
Benchmarks: • Increase percentage of adequate prenatal care; • Increase access to safe and affordable child care; • Increase percentage of two-year-olds with immunizations; • Reduce rate of HIV infection among childbearing women; • Reduce child abuse and neglect; • Reduce teen pregnancy; • Improve early childhood development; • Increase percentage of healthy birthweight babies; and • Decrease infant mortality rate.

Support Teams Provide Critical Information for the Oregon Option

Two support teams were formed to assist the work of all the clusters — the Data Support Team and the Communication and Information Support Team. When the clusters were first formed, there was no way of knowing how important data collection and analysis would be in

[29] Macy, C.H. *The Oregon Option.*

[30] Macy, C.H. *The Oregon Option.*

determining progress toward the Benchmarks and the overall achievements of the Option. The Data Support Team was formed when it became apparent that data collection and analysis were critical components of the process. The team responds to the information and statistics needs of all the clusters and is composed of data experts from the state government and the federal statistical agencies.

The purpose of the Communication and Information Technology team is to fill the information and communication needs of the clusters. Its specific charge is to develop information technology that will work for legislators, community groups, government agencies, and the Option. The team aims to improve communication among the clusters and all levels of government. The team has created Web sites for the Option (www.econ.state.or.us/opb/or_opt/index.htm) and the Progress Board (www.econ.state.or.us/opb) and has developed an e-mail system for communication among Option participants.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES DESIGNED TO ASSESS PROGRESS TOWARD ACHIEVING BENCHMARKS

In 1993, legislation was passed giving the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) responsibility for ensuring that agency activities, including the establishment of performance measures, were aimed at achieving Benchmarks. The DAS has developed state budget instructions that clarify how to determine performance measures that accurately reflect an agency's mission, as well as relate to obtainable benchmark data.

History of the Development of Performance Measures

The Department of Administrative Services (DAS) [31] began efforts to implement statewide use of performance measures in all state agencies in 1991. In 1993, these efforts were institutionalized with the passage of Senate Bill 1130 (ORS 291.110). The legislation gives the DAS responsibility for seeing that agency activities, including the establishment of performance measures, are aimed toward achieving the Benchmarks. Under the legislation, DAS is charged with providing agencies with assistance on the appropriate reporting format for performance measure data and helping with the development of performance measures in cases where a Benchmark spans agency boundaries. In turn, agencies must engage in a planning process that involves agency managers, supervisors, and employees, and that results in a statement of the mission, goals, and objectives of the agency in terms of Oregon Benchmarks.

Process for the Identification of Performance Measures

State Budget Instructions Clarify What Performance Measures Should Be
Although Oregon does not have a performance-based budgeting process in place to date, performance measures are listed in agency budgets. Thus, the state budget instructions provide guidelines for the development of the performance measures. As agencies select measures, they are instructed to use the following seven questions as guidelines:

- Is the measure understandable?
- Does the measure tie directly to the agency's mission?
- Can sufficient, accurate, and reliable information to support the measure be obtained?
- Does the measure relate to some service objective that no other measure encompasses?
- Is the measure used to make management decisions?
- Is the performance measure communicated to staff?
- Do the agency measures cover all results identified in the budget's Agency Summary Narrative?

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[31] In Oregon, the Department of Administrative Services serves the same function as what many states call the Department of Management; that is, it oversees the central functioning of the Oregon state government.

The budget instructions highlight the importance of including all agency staff in the performance measure process. Top management must act as champions of the effort and set the vision and priorities of the agency. Mid-level managers and line staff must determine the necessary duties to achieve the mission and vision. One informant underscored the importance of getting everyone involved: "The state agencies that are the most successful with the performance measures are those that have involved advocacy groups, as well as customers and agency staff, to determine where they want to go, what their strategic plan is, and, as a last step, what they want to measure."

Uses of Performance Measures

Performance Measures and the Oregon Benchmarks
As agencies were attempting to institute performance measures, the DAS allowed for variation in the content of the performance measures and the way in which the data were presented. Now that agencies are accustomed to monitoring their performance, DAS is asking that they use their performance measures to articulate their vision for the future. The next step across agencies is to connect performance measures more uniformly to the Oregon Benchmarks. In the governor's budget document, investment budget initiatives are linked to performance measures. The Progress Board identified the Benchmarks related to the initiatives and worked with agencies to develop the measures. This linkage in the governor's budget is intended, in part, to provide a framework for other state programs to make the links between performance measures and the Benchmarks.

The Adult and Family Services Division Shifts Focus
The Adult and Family Services (AFS) division of the DHR is an example of how one agency has assimilated into its operations three of the broader efforts underway in Oregon: the Oregon Benchmarks, the Oregon Option, and performance measures. Historically, AFS was the state's "welfare agency"; as such, it was responsible for determining welfare eligibility and distributing benefits. However, over a period of several years, AFS shifted its focus from dispensing welfare payments to helping low-income families become self-sufficient through work, receipt of child support payments, and other means. Welfare in Oregon is now viewed as only a temporary support.

AFS Efforts Linked to Performance Measures and Benchmarks
In 1991, the agency developed a set of performance measures through collaboration with its partners throughout the state (including client advocates, local private industry, and local chambers of commerce). Performance measures track outcomes that correspond to the agency's mission of putting people to work. They also correspond to Oregon Benchmarks. For example, one of the performance measures is "Total Child Support Collections," which is explicitly linked to the Oregon Benchmark of "Percentage of current court ordered child support paid to families."

AFS has service strategies in place to help in achieving their defined outcomes. For example, they work closely with the Support Enforcement Division and local district attorneys to establish paternity and court orders for support. Information on "most wanted" non-paying parents is

published on the Internet, and individuals who log in to this site can electronically submit information on any parent to the Child Support Program. The state also has expanded its child support enforcement laws to allow for revocation of licenses for non-payment of child support. Since 1991, child support payments in Oregon have increased almost 25% as a result of this effort.

Local performance results are calculated monthly based on data input by caseworkers. The central AFS office provides supportive reports for each of the performance measures. These reports include a definition of the measures and outline what the measure demonstrates; how the measure should be calculated; and whether or not the measure is currently being produced (See Table 10 below). Local statistics are distributed to branch offices and are used for evaluation of new activities and procedures. The measures are reviewed and refined periodically to make sure that they accurately reflect the agency's objectives.

Table 10. Example of AFS Performance Measure for Child Support[32]

Performance Measure for Percentage of ADC Cases Receiving Child Support	
Definition of Measure:	The percentage of ADC cases during the month receiving a child support payment
What the Measure Demonstrates:	The ability of a family to achieve self-sufficiency is greatly improved as their income rises. Child support is a primary resource to supplement wages.
How to Calculate the Measure:	Numerator: Number of open and closed ADC cases, including transfers to M5 and P2, receiving a support payment during a month Denominator: ADC caseload from the flash figures and closed ADC cases from the 403B Transaction Reason Code Report
Is the Measure currently Being Used?:	Not in production, child support payment data being developed for February review, anticipate production 3/1/96 *

* Since data were collected for this case study, the measure has been produced successfully and AFS reports that they are "on target."

AFS Efforts Tie into the Oregon Option

AFS operates under the provisions of a wide-ranging set of federal welfare waivers known as the

[32] Department of Administrative Services.(1996). *Field services section, operational performance measures.* 2/29/96. Salem, OR: Author.

"Oregon Option Welfare Reform Waivers." As such, the agency's reworked mission and performance measures fit into the restructured federal-state relationship(See section on Oregon Option) around provision of supports to needy families, and AFS played an important role in writing the welfare reform waivers. In 1995, AFS worked closely with the Oregon Legislature to pass SB 1117, a welfare reform bill. Within the text of the bill is a mandate that all necessary federal waivers be sought so that the provisions of the bill could be accommodated. The goal of the legislation and that of the Family Stability cluster of the Oregon Option was the same, that families become economically self-sufficient. The cluster included a pre-existing task force that had been appointed by the legislature to reform the state welfare system.

The cluster's early work focused on obtaining the welfare waivers that were necessary to enact SB 1117. The request for the waivers was submitted in the summer of 1995 and approved in April 1996. The waivers were put into action in July 1996 and allowed AFS to mandate that everyone receiving welfare must participate in self-sufficiency activities, toughen penalties and sanctions for non-participation, and expand the JOBS Plus program across the state. As a result of the waivers, Oregon's welfare caseload has dropped significantly since 1994, and Oregon currently ranks second in the nation in the rate of caseload decrease. Informants in Oregon attribute the decrease in caseload not so much to the use of sanctions, as to the agency's shift in emphasis toward self-sufficiency, which has resulted in increased job placements. As one informant stated, "a sanction is not a hammer," but rather a tool to get attention from the clients so they can get help.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP TEAM: SERVICE INTEGRATION AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

The purpose of the Community Partnership Team (CPT) is to promote locally integrated services while supporting the Department of Human Resource's (DHR) goals and outcomes. The most important function of the CPT is to help communities develop service strategies aligning human services at the state and local levels. Currently, CPT works with 39 service integration projects in 35 of Oregon's 36 counties. Using the structure provided by the Benchmarks, CPT brings partners from the state and local level together to decide on desired human service outcomes and to determine strategies to achieve them.

History of the CPT Effort

The DHR has taken a leadership role in service integration since 1991, when, in a series of town hall meetings, more than 500 citizens voiced their concerns about human services delivery and asked for increased citizen involvement in DHR's planning. In response to this, DHR developed seven community-based pilot integration projects, the purpose of which was to establish local collaborative efforts to achieve broad human service goals. In 1995 the DHR institutionalized its service integration efforts with the establishment of a new work unit, the Community Partnership Team (CPT). The CPT was charged with promoting locally integrated services (such as the pilot projects); addressing internal and external barriers to service integration; and supporting the DHR'S goals and outcomes.[33] The most important function of the CPT is to help communities develop service strategies that are in keeping with the Oregon Benchmarks, thus aligning human services at the state and local levels.

The CPT is made up of three units: Community Development and Service Integration, the Volunteer Program, and Communications. The Community Development and Service Integration Unit assists in designing and facilitating group processes and works toward obtaining more local participation in determining DHR's services. The Volunteer Program's managers and local volunteers work toward the goal of achieving the Benchmarks by mobilizing citizens and helping to plan and carry out strategies that can reach the desired results. By providing communications services, the Communications Unit helps prepare citizens, employees, and community partners to be a part of defining and delivering human services to reach results.

Process of Identifying Goals and Indicators for the CPT

Currently, CPT works with 39 service integration projects in 35 of Oregon's 36 counties. Using the structure provided by the Benchmarks, CPT brings partners from the state and local level together to decide on desired human service outcomes and to determine strategies to achieve them. The specific goals of the 39 projects vary, but all fit within at least one of DHR's four broad goals:

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[33] Community Partnership Team. (1996). *Annual report on service integration.* Salem, OR: Author.

- People are healthy;
- People are able to support themselves and their families:
- People are safe; and
- People are living as independently as possible.

Eight of these 39 projects were selected in January 1996 by the DHR Cabinet to be comprehensive demonstration projects. These eight counties were selected to become partners with DHR. The partnerships build on the four years of experience the DHR has with service integration. These eight sites are working to realize the Benchmarks and "serve as incubators for application of the principles of the Oregon Option, as well as a prudent cost avoidance strategy for the longer terms."[34]

Uses of the CPT Effort

How CPT Links Counties with Oregon Benchmarks
Marion County provides a good example of how CPT promotes the use of Oregon Benchmarks at the local level. The goals of the CPT project in Marion County are to build family capacity for self-sufficiency; develop groups of local and agency staff to plan and implement services to support families; and develop a "grassroots" effort to realign service delivery in three neighborhoods. The CPT has helped Marion County identify ten Benchmarks relevant to their work, including Benchmarks in the areas of crime, teen-age drinking and drug abuse, high school graduation rate, gang influence, and understanding cultural diversity.

[34] Oregon Community Partnership Team Web site: http://www.hr.state.or.us/cpt.

CONCLUSION:
RBA IN OREGON STILL HAS A LONG WAY TO GO

While Oregon is widely viewed as being the state that is the farthest along in terms of results-based government, the perception of the people who are doing this work in the state is that there is much more work to be done. Most informants felt that the state was only 5-10 percent of the way toward what the process could ultimately do. One person likened the process to "turning a ship in a bathtub." This attitude reflects a shared frustration of those developing RBA systems, namely, that they are overly ambitious in their expectations to increase collaboration, empower workers, decentralize decision-making, and engage the public.

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OBJECTIVES, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY

Objectives

The objective of this case study is to describe the design, development, and implementation of Oregon's RBA efforts, particularly those related to programs serving children and families. This report is directed toward people who are interested in learning about the efforts of this state and/or who may have a role in developing an RBA system in their own state, locality, or institution. The case study discusses the key RBA efforts in the state, the impetus for and history of these efforts, the governance structures, the design and implementation of these efforts (including the identification of goals, indicators, and targets), the current or proposed use of the systems, and some of the lessons learned.

Scope

HFRP has produced RBA case studies of eight states: Florida, Georgia, Iowa, Minnesota, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, and Vermont. The research for these case studies was conducted between January 1996 and November 1997.

Methodology

HFRP staff utilized qualitative data collection methodologies to gather the information included in these case studies. Staff began the selection of the eight states chosen for our case studies by contacting key informants from national organizations who have been working in the area of RBA. These key informants nominated a number of states that were currently planning, designing, and/or implementing RBA systems for child and family programs. HFRP staff then contacted staff in these states and reviewed documents to learn more about the nature of their efforts. Additionally, HFRP contacted staff in a number of other states to learn if they were engaged in the development of RBA systems for child and family programs and, if so, what the nature of efforts was. Based on this research, HFRP staff identified the efforts of eighteen states, which are highlighted in our publication, *Resource Guide of Results-Based Accountability Efforts: Profiles of Selected States (1997)*.

From the eighteen states profiled, HFRP selected eight states to study in-depth. The eight case study states were chosen because they represent different foci as well as various stages of development. These states are implementing a variety of accountability approaches, including statewide and agency-level strategic planning, performance-based budgeting, and performance-based contracting. Each state has conceptualized and developed its system in response to its needs, as well as the technical, organizational, and political constraints within which it operates.

To obtain information on each of the eight states' RBA efforts, HFRP staff reviewed a variety of documentation and conducted extensive telephone interviews with key informants at the state and local levels. Staff then conducted week-long site visits to each state. During each site visit, staff interviewed a number of personnel from governors' offices, state and local agencies, legislatures, advocacy groups, and universities. During these interviews, interviewees were asked about the key aspects of the conceptualization, development, and implementation of RBA systems. They were also asked about challenges they faced in developing these efforts and the

lessons that they had learned. Where possible, HFRP staff also attended planning meetings around RBA work. For each case study, HFRP interviewed at least 30 individuals with a variety of affiliations to obtain a comprehensive and varied view of the state's efforts.

Given the variety of RBA efforts in states, the multiple entities and actors involved, and the many components of these efforts, HFRP staff developed a multi-level analytic framework to examine the data. This framework enabled HFRP to code interview data by four categories: the system (for example, strategic planning, performance budgeting, performance contracting); the governance level (for example, statewide, inter-agency, agency, local entity); the aspect of the system (for example, history, design and implementation, uses, barriers and opportunities, sustainability); and the actor (for example, governor's staff; legislators/staff; agency staff; advocacy groups). In some cases, these dimensions were further refined. This multiple coding enabled HFRP staff to compile comprehensive descriptions of efforts in each state based on a variety of perspectives. This framework also enabled staff to examine a variety of cross-case themes (for example, the use of budgeting systems by legislatures across states and the processes agencies in different states have used to choose goals and indicators). A qualitative software package, NUD*IST©, facilitated analysis of the data.

We recognize that RBA systems are evolving and will continue to evolve in response to both implementation challenges and state and national policy changes. Therefore, we stress that the information contained in these case studies describes these states' RBA initiatives as of November 1997.

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